(b) Department of Telecommunications does not collect data pertaining specifically to household Internet users in the country. However, total number of all types of Internet subscribers in the country as on December 31, 2006 was 86.1 lakh.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Rapid expansion of telecom sector

2586. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has become the third largest telecommunication network in the world after China and USA;

(b) the total number of telephones provided in the country as on January 31, 2006 as against the number of telephones required till March 2007, both in rural and urban areas;

(c) whether it is also a fact that on an average addition in number of telephone subscribers is reportedly more than two lakhs a day; and

(d) if so, whether rapid expansion of telecom sector would be able to maintain its pace to meet the growing demand as a whole in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. India has become the third-largest telecommunication network in the world after China and USA.

(b) The total number of telephones in the country as on January 31, 2006 were 130.91 million as against the target of 250 million telephones by December 31, 2007 both in rural and urban areas together. As on March 2007, the total telephones are 206.83 million.

(c) Yes, Sir. On an average approximately 6.00 million telephone subscribers are added each month, which is equivalent to addition of around 2.00 lakh subscribers per day.

(d) Yes, Sir.